

Message Text

SECRET

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44

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 ACDA-05 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 MC-02 EB-07 /070 W

----- 073594

R 311330Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7034

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

S E C R E T SANA 3685

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, YE, UK, SA, US

SUBJECT: YAR ARMS PURCHASES IN WEST

1. UK AMBASSADOR IN SANA TOLD DCM TODAY THAT HE HAD NO DETAILS OF TYPE OF ARMS WHICH SAUDIS HAD AGREED TO FUND FOR YAR, BUT HE HAD REPORT FROM JIDDA THAT ALL PROCUREMENT WOULD BE DONE THROUGH SAG AND THAT SAUDI DEPUTY MIN OF DEFENSE WOULD VISIT LONDON VERY SHORTLY IN CONNECTION WITH SOME PURCHASES.

2. WITH SAUDI-YEMENI AGREEMENT NOW APPARENTLY ON TRACK, BELIEVE WE SHOULD SIGNAL BRITISH OUR WILLINGNESS CONSULT CLOSELY AND IN ADVANCE WITH THEM ON MEANS OF GETTING WESTERN ARMS INTO YEMEN TO REPLACE SOVIET ARMS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, PARTICULARLY IN REGARDS TO PARTICULAR MILITARY UNITS AND TO CRITICAL GENERAL AREAS OF YARG NEED. FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW IT SEEMS REASONABLE TO THINK THAT THIS KIND OF CONSULTATION SHOULD BE INTEGRAL PART OF EFFORTS WHICH USG MAKING (LAST PARA, STATE 292961) TO REVIED WHAT IT CAN DO IN SHORT TERM FOR IMPACT PACKAGE.

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3. APPRECIATE THAT BRITISH APPEARED NOT TO HAVE

BEEN COMPLETELY OPEN WITH US IN MATTERS OF THEIR PLANS AND HOPES TO SUPPLY ARMS, BUT WE ARE ALSO STRUCK WITH FACT THAT BRITISH, AT OUR REQUEST, HELD UP FROM RESPONDING TO ANY REQUEST FOR A ARMS SURVEY TEAM OF THEIR OWN OR FROM SUGGESTING SALES OF BRITISH ARMS TO YEMENIS. BRITISH HAVE ALSO PLAYED USEFUL ROLE, PARALLELING OUR OWN, IN BRINGING SAUDIS AND YEMENIS TO TERMS WITH EACH OTHER AND WE BELIEVE IT IS STRONGLY IN USG INTEREST TO COOPERATE FULLY WITH BRITISH IN COMING PERIOD.

4. WE BELIEVE BRITISH ACCEPT IDEA THAT AT LEAST IN INITIAL PERIOD OF CHANGE OVER FROM SOVIET TO WESTERN ARMS COOPERATION IN TIMELY AND APPROPRIATE WEAPONS DELIVERY AS MUCH MORE IMPORTANT THAN US-UK COMMERCIAL COMPETITION. WE AGREE.

5. IMPORTANCE OF THIS COOPERATION IS HIGHLIGHTED BY FACT THAT DESPITE APPARENT SAUDI-YEMENI AGREEMENT ON ARMS, ONE RESULT OF HAMDI TRIP TO JIDDA SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN IMPLICIT SAUDI ACCEPTANCE FOR NEW SUPPLY OF OLDER SOVIET WEAPONS SYSTEMS LIKE MIG 17S AND T 34S. THIS AMOUNTS TO A RESUMPTION OF MORE MORIBUND ARMS SUPPLY RELATIONSHIP WITH YEMEN AND MEANS, WE THINK, THAT TRAINING IN THE SOVIET UNION WILL CONTINUE AND SOVIET MILITARY MISSION IN SANA WILL LIKEWISE REMAIN FOR INDEFINITE PERIOD. THIS QUALIFIES THE VICTORY WHICH THE SAUDIS SEEMED TO HAVE WON IN PRE-EMPTING MUCH LARGER ARMS DEAL WHICH SOVIETS WERE APPARENTLY WILLING TO MAKE WITH YEMENIS FOR NUMEROUS AND MODERN WEAPONS SYSTEMS. THUS, IF SUPPLIES FROM WEST DO NOT MATERIALIZE FAIRLY SOON, SOVIETS WILL BE IN GOOD POSITION TO EXPAND LIMITED SUPPLY NOW ENVISIONED FROM THEM.

SCOTES

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NNN

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